

Case 3003

***Meristella* Hall, 1859 (Brachiopoda): proposed designation of *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem, 1842 as the type species**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the Lower Devonian brachiopod name *Meristella* Hall, 1859 in its accustomed usage. Hall included only one species, *Atrypa naviformis* Hall, 1843, which was therefore the type species by monotypy. However, *A. naviformis* is poorly known and seldom cited. The designation by Miller (1889) of *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem, 1842 as type species is almost universally accepted and should be validated.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Brachiopoda; Lower Devonian; *Meristella*; *Meristella laevis*.

1. The name *Meristella* was first used by Hall (1859, p. 78) in the 12th Annual Report of the Regents of the University of the State of New York. Hall listed a number of species giving both their original name and the current name. The name *Atrypa naviformis* Hall, 1843 (p. 72) was changed to '*Merista? naviformis*', with a footnote which reads: 'This species, and some others of the Clinton and Niagara groups, differ somewhat from true *Meristae*; and should these differences prove of generic importance, I propose for them the name *Meristella*'. Under Article 15 of the Code, the conditional nature of this proposal does not prevent availability. *Atrypa naviformis* was the only species named with reference to *Meristella* and is therefore its type species by monotypy.

2. A year later Hall (1860, p. 74) published a detailed description of *Meristella* with the suffix (n.g.), adding that the name was 'proposed by me last year'. He (p. 75) included as examples '*Meristella laevis*, *M. bella* and *M. arcuata* of the Lower Helderberg group; *M. cylindrica* and *M. oblata* of the Niagara and Clinton groups'. He did not refer to *M. naviformis*.

3. Davidson (1882, p. 83) gave *Meristella arcuata* (Hall) as type species of *Meristella*, and this was also accepted as the type by Schuchert (1897, p. 266).

4. Miller (1889, p. 354) ignored Davidson's paper and gave *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem, 1842 (p. 120) as the type species of *Meristella*. He did not include *Atrypa naviformis* amongst the 20 species he included in *Meristella*, instead placing it in *Athyris* McCoy, 1844. Miller's designation of *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem as type species of *Meristella* was accepted by Hall & Clarke (1893, p. 75) who discussed in detail the characteristics of the various species assigned by Hall to the genus in previous papers, stressing the inadequacy of using *A. naviformis* as type and the appropriateness of using *A. laevis* instead.

5. *Atrypa laevis* was adopted as type species of *Meristella* in the first edition of the *Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology* by Boucot, Johnson & Staton (1965, p. H656).

and is taken as such by virtually all recent authors (e.g. Havlíček, 1956, p. 78; Savage, 1971, p. 413; Nikiforova, Modzalevskaia & Bassett, 1985, p. 53; a further 9 references using the same type species by a further 16 authors in the last 50 years are held by the Commission Secretariat). It is intended to give *A. laevis* as the type species of *Meristella* in the forthcoming second edition of the *Treatise*.

6. To maintain the widely accepted concept of *Meristella* I propose that *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem, 1842 be accepted as its type species.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all fixations of type species for the nominal genus *Meristella* Hall, 1859 prior to that by Miller (1889) of *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem, 1842;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Meristella* Hall, 1859 (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Miller (1889) *Atrypa laevis* Vanuxem, 1842;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *laevis* Vanuxem, 1842, as published in the binomen *Atrypa laevis* (specific name of the type species of *Meristella* Hall, 1859).

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